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Faculty Senate - November 16, 2009 Meeting Minutes

Faculty Senate

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The University of Tennessee Faculty Senate
MINUTES
November 16, 2009

Absent: Lt. Col. Michael Angle, Roberto Benson, Caula Beyl, Bill Blass, Doug Blaze, Bill Bradshaw, Ernest Brewer, Jim Conant, Steven Dandaneau, Jim Drake, Michael Handelsman*, Russel Hirst, Roxanne Hovland, Denise Jackson, Robert Jones, Yuri Kamychkov, Jun Lin, John Lounsbury, Norman Magden, Brent Mallinckrodt, Mary McAlpin, Lane Morris, Lynne Parker, W. Tim Rogers, Rupy Sawhney, Jon Shefner, Michael Sims, Montgomery Smith, Carla Sommardahl, Marlys Staudt, Carrie Stephens, Sam Swan, Dwight Teeter, Matthew Theriot, Patricia Tithof, Pia Wood, Yang Zhong

*Alternate Senators: Baldwin Lee for Michael Handelsman

T. Boulet called the meeting to order at 3:32 p.m.

ANNOUNCEMENTS

Establishment of a Quorum (S. Kurth)

S. Kurth reported a quorum was present.

Senate President's Report (T. Boulet)

T. Boulet's report was distributed prior to the meeting. He drew attention to several items in his report. He said he was thinking of surveying contingent faculty about representation on the Senate. If a survey were conducted in the spring, there would be time over the summer to decide whether contingent faculty representation should be pursued. L. Craig pointed out that two of the five Senators from the College of Veterinary Medicine are non-tenure track. Boulet indicated he would look into it further.

- President Simek has proceeded with establishing a committee to study the optimum reporting line for athletics. T. Diacon will chair the committee that will have five UTK faculty members as members. There will be a press release.
- Boulet drew attention to the report on the status of academic freedom at UTK attached to the meeting materials. The report prepared by S. Simmons will be discussed at the January 11 meeting of the Executive Council. The American Association of University Professors (AAUP) has been pursuing the issue at the national level. He expected the President of the local AAUP, an at-large member of the Executive Council, would bring any local activities on the issue to the Executive Council.
- Boulet reported that various universities have created tobacco-free campuses. Human Relations is in the process of gathering information on how they did it. No decision has been made.
- He noted that the position of Vice Provost for Academic Affairs involved a redefinition and suggested that any questions about it be directed to the Provost during her presentation.
- In January Chancellor Cheek will meet with the Executive Council and the full Senate to discuss the ongoing reorganization of Human Resources.

J. Nolt endorsed the proposed exploration of the situation of contingent faculty noting that if they were not represented they could not speak.

Provost's Report (S. Martin)

S. Martin explained that in order to plan for the 8% decrease currently being met by stimulus funds, the Provost's Office has been engaging in strategic planning meetings with Deans and their staffs. About half of the meetings have been held. Once the meetings are completed, she will report to various bodies (including the Senate) on the meetings.

Currently, the Program Review, Reduction and Reallocation (PRRR) report is being used to consider program reduction. Also, current offerings are being examined to see if greater efficiency could be achieved in offering General Education courses. She suggested the General Education Curriculum might be streamlined, up-dated, and courses fit to the Ready for the World initiative. She said the General Education requirements had basically been unchanged for about two decades.

She noted that formerly the Vice Provost for Academic Affairs position had focused more on operations. The search committee interviewed three candidates. She was waiting for their report. She said the position would focus less on tactics to increase retention and more on enhancing program excellence. The Vice Provost will work closely with the Undergraduate Council and also on promoting graduate programs.

MINUTES

Faculty Senate Meeting

The minutes of the October 19, 2009, Faculty Senate meeting were moved and seconded. Minutes approved.

Faculty Senate Executive Committee Meeting

The minutes of the November 2, 2009, meeting of the Executive Committee will be available on the web as an information item.

PREVIOUS BUSINESS

There was no previous business.

REPORTS OF STANDING COMMITTEES

Graduate Council (M. Essington)

M. Essington reported on the electronically posted minutes of the October 22, 2009, Graduate Council minutes. Among the actions reported in the minutes was approval of a readmission policy that conformed with the undergraduate policy. Programs were approved. The Council voted against a change in the registration deadline that was also opposed by the graduate student organization. And, people were approved to direct dissertations. Courses that had not been taught were dropped. Birdwell moved approval and Koontz seconded. The Minutes were approved.

Undergraduate Council (D. Thompson)

The Minutes of the October 20, 2009, meeting required approval. D. Thompson said the committee reports were fairly standard, addressing some curricular changes, appeals and General Education courses. There had been some comments on the electronic digital software that will follow students throughout their academic careers. It is being tested in the College of Business Administration with the goal of it being available to all advisors in the fall. Notes can be placed in the file, so information/consultation is documented. It will be fully integrated with BANNER. Thompson said in the spring it would be able to handle transfer students and articulation agreements.

T. Wang asked whether it had anything to do with TUFS. Boulet said it did not. Thompson said the question was why it was so difficult to transfer from one public Tennessee institution of higher education to another. P. Crilly asked how maintenance of standards would be addressed.

Thompson said the system cannot address different grading standards. B. Lyons said rather than requiring the same courses everywhere, instead each institution's acceptance of completed General Education packages was the focus. Thompson said the question was how would the University establish that a student had completed the courses, as many students partially complete them. Birdwell moved approval of the minutes. Wang seconded. Minutes approved.

NEW BUSINESS AND ANNOUNCEMENTS

There was no new business.

Meeting adjourned at 4:07 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,
Suzanne Kurth, Secretary